

According to GovTrack.us, Texas Rep. Joe Barton's Internet poker bill, H.R. 2366, has 30 supporters, while California **Rep. John Campbell's** Internet gambling bill, H.R. 1174, remains close behind with 29.

On MGM Resorts' first-quarter earnings presentation last week, Chief Executive Jim Murren told analysts that the company "continued to remain aggressively focused on pursuing federal legislation for online poker." He also said that the company is "keenly aware" of state-level Internet gambling opportunities that it believes will "likely emerge."

For now, those opportunities are limited to Nevada, where regulators are reviewing license applications for businesses angling to operate intrastate Internet poker, and to New Jersey and California, where Internet gambling legislation is pending.

Speaking of California, Bwin.Party Digital Entertainment this week announced a 10-year deal to supply the United Auburn Indian Community, one of the state's leading tribal gaming operators, with Internet poker services. The deal will take effect once Internet poker is legalized there. Meanwhile, senior staffers on the California Senate Committee on Governmental Organization, where Internet gambling legislation is pending, told GamblingCompliance.com that that legislation, SB1463, will not be heard until after draft amendments are reviewed by powerful special interest groups with skin in the game.

Turning to New Jersey, state Sen. Ray Lesniak, a Democrat and the state's leading Internet gambling proponent, this week accused Gov. Chris Christie, a Republican, of foot-dragging on the thorny issue of whether to legalize Internet gambling. Lesniak told The Philadelphia Inquirer that Christie, who has been tipped as Mitt Romney's vice-presidential pick, fears that to legalize Internet gambling in the Garden State would be to alienate deep-pocketed GOP donors, including Sheldon Adelson, chairman of Las Vegas Sands and a staunch Internet gambling opponent. Christie's spokesman, Michael Drewniak, was quoted as saying: "Democrats criticize us for everything, so what else is new? I don't feel the need to weigh in at this moment."

Despite the testy exchange between Christie and Lesniak, Internet gambling legislation this week cleared the New Jersey Assembly Committee on Gaming and Regulatory Oversight in a 3-to-1 vote. The bill, A2578, now awaits a floor vote. Lesniak's companion bill in the state Senate, S1565, which cleared two committee votes in March and April, respectively, awaits

same.